AROUND NORTH AMERICA

P–FOX Hosts First Conference

Speakers at the first P-FOX conference included (top row, l–r): Joe Dallas (former Exodus president), Anthony Falzarano (head of P-FOX), John Paulk (Exodus vice-chair); (bottom row): Dawn Vukich (Hinds Feet Ministries), Ann Phillips and Pat Kulp (Kindred Spirit Ministries)

WASHINGTON DC—The first annual conference for Parents & Friends of Ex-Gays (P-FOX) occurred at Gallaudet University in Washington D.C. February 28–30. Over 240 people from 20 states—the majority were parents of gay children—gathered for three days of teaching and fellowship with a focus of establishing P-FOX chapters nationwide. Anthony Falzarano, director of the local Exodus referral agency, *Transformation Christian Ministries,* organized and hosted the event.

Media coverage for the conference was heavy, and included FOX TV, ABC News, Cox Broadcasting, "Family News in Focus" and "60 Minutes." *The Washington Blade,* a gay weekly paper, gave the conference front-page coverage in its March 7 issue.

"Anthony and his staff did a stellar job of getting the word out to the press," said John Paulk, Exodus vice-chair and a speaker at the event. "Anthony and I did 15 interviews between us over a four-day period."

Exodus board member Anita Worthen was also a speaker at the conference. "P-FOX is a new national organization whose time has come," she said. "I believe we will be hearing more from them." Anita expressed one concern: P-FOX policies "come from the limited vision of ex-gay males, and I fear it will be stifled in its growth." Anita was encouraged when Anthony expressed the desire to set up a board, including parents, to oversee the new organization.

One woman who attended later identified herself as a member of PFLAG (a national pro-gay organization for parents and friends of gays). "PFLAG will not be able to ignore P-FOX," she wrote in a PFLAG report. Parents who embrace traditional moral values "will find a sweet haven in P-FOX," she said, adding that Anthony Falzarano "is likable, competent and has great stage presence. I have no doubt that under his leadership P-FOX is going to soar."

—Reported by Anthony Falzarano, John Paulk, Anita Worthen

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Exodus Sponsors International Conference

TORONTO—The international office of Exodus in Toronto, Canada, is sponsoring its first conference, "Around the Corner... Around the World." This event is especially geared to cross-cultural ministry, and will feature such classes as Asian Culture and Psychology as it Applies to Homosexuality, Latin America & Homosexuality, and Canadian Homosexuality. Speakers include Sy Rogers, Exodus missionary to Singapore; Melvin Wong, who has led an Exodus team to Hong Kong, Patricia Allan, coordinator of the Exodus International (worldwide) board, and Esly Regina Carvalho, coordinator over the Latin American region of Exodus International.

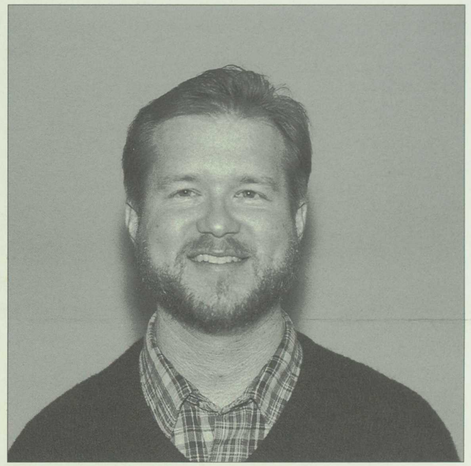
This event is more international in scope and subject matter than the annual North American conference, which will be held in early July at Asbury Theological Seminary in Kentucky. The international gathering, scheduled for September 11–13 in Toronto, Canada, will include 42 workshops taught by Exodus speakers from around the world. Registration is $75.00 (if postmarked by July 31), which does not include housing and meals. Some classes may be translated into non-English languages, depending on the demand. For a brochure with full details, contact: Exodus International, PO Box 21039, Ajax, ON Canada L1H 7H2; phone 905/686-7363; fax 905/686-1716.

MEDIA

Ex-Gay Commercial Stirs Controversy

ST. PAUL, MN—A television commercial offering a message of change for the homosexual has provoked outrage by the gay community in the Twin Cities area. The commercials are sponsored by *Outpost,* an Exodus referral ministry in St. Paul, MN.

"We've been accused of being homophobic, hateful, racist—you name it!" reported associate director Dan Puumala. The commercial, funded by a special grant to the ministry, first aired during the Elizabeth Taylor birthday extravaganza in late February. Afterward, a donor contributed $21,000 to have the commercial aired during the Academy Awards presentation in late March.



Dan Puumala, associate director of Outpost: "Blown away" by the response to his ministry's new commercial promoting change.

Dan said the controversy has prompted interviews from other news media in the Minneapolis and St. Paul area. Now station producers are debating free-speech rights, arguing that pro-gay organizations can buy airtime, so ex-gay groups should be able to do it as well.

The *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* covered the controversy on February 28, nothing that KSTP had received about 200 complaints within the first two days of running the advertisement. But Harold Crump, KSTP station manager, defended his decision to run the ad: "[It] is neither obscene nor illegal, and we don't think it should be censored."

The ad is simple: An attractive young man is shaving in front of a mirror. His appearance is reminiscent of a gay male getting ready to go out cruising at a local gay bar. A musical jingle sings "There's hope for change" while a voice-over explains that "many gay men and lesbians have left the lifestyle." The man stares pensively into the mirror as the camera zooms closer. As he wipes away the mist gathered on the mirror, his reflection turns from black-and-white into full color. A toll-free number and computer web site are given at the end.

The advertisement was paid for by a special financial gift to *Outpost*, and has focussed heavy media attention upon the ministry. Local TV stations have reported on the controversy during evening news broadcasts; these local news programs are picked up by small stations around the country who can't afford live 24-hour programing. Outpost has received responses from San Francisco, Phoenix, Albuquerque and Florida. Reporters from as far away as Washington D.C. have contacted *Outpost* for interviews.

Keep us in your prayers," Dan says. "The response to this ad has completely blown us away."

RESOURCES

CrossOver Launches Trans-Gender Ministry

LEXINGTON–*CrossOver*, one of the Exodus ministries in Kentucky, has officially launched a new arm of its ministry, directed toward those struggling with trans-gender issues. TGIF stands for "Trans-Gender Identity Fellowship" (more properly called "Thank God I'm Free," jokes director Jerry Leach).

TGIF "is an international ministry that offers help and resources for those people dealing with trans-gender issues who desire to be changed and set free." They conduct teaching seminars, testimonials, newsletters, and information packets to family members, friends, clergy, professional care-providers, and those directly affected by trans-gender confusion.

"We are establishing an international network of referral ministries within Exodus International and similar ministries who desire to help those specifically dealing with trans-gender issues," says Jerry.

CALENDAR

- *May 14&15–Johannesburg, May 19&20–Capetown, May 23&24–Durban, South Africa.* Exodus '97 Conference with Anita Worthen, David Kyle Foster, Roger & Josephine Williamson, and others. Info: TRAIL Blazers, PO Box 68969, Bryanston, 2021, South Africa.

- *May 17–San Diego.* Symposium on "Controversial Issues in Homosexuality," sponsored by the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality. Speakers include Joe Nicolosi and Charles Socarides. Info: 818/789-4440.

MEDIA

- "Sex, Lies and the Kinsey Reports" by Rachel Wildavsky in the April 1997 *Reader's Digest* exposes the fraudulent basis of the world-famous Alfred Kinsey studies (which launched, among other things, the myth that 10% of the population is gay). Important reading!

- "Homosexuality: Not a case of genetic conditioning" was the lead article in the Oregon state insert of *Citizen* magazine (January issue), published by Focus on the Family.

- "Putting a Face on Homosexuality" is a three-part series in the April issue of *Virtue*, a magazine for Christian women. A mother, a friend, and a woman who has struggled with lesbianism share their stories. Excellent! For a copy, contact your local Christian bookstore.